

# Child Welfare in Wisconsin

## A Report on Wisconsin's Federal Child and Family Services Review

Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services  
Division of Children and Family Services

February 2004

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State of Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services  
Division of Children and Family Services  
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An executive summary and Wisconsin’s complete Child and Family Services Review can be found at <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/cwreview/cfsr.htm>. Questions or comments on this document may be directed to the Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) at 608-267-3905.

## A Message from the Secretary

Wisconsin people are committed to creating opportunities for all children to grow up safe, healthy, and successful. We give more than lip service to this commitment. We've invested in one of the best educational systems in the world, because we know that education is a ticket to a better future for individuals and for our state. We do a better job of providing health care to poor children and their families than most other states. Yet we can and we must do more to make sure that *all* kids are safe and healthy.

In a typical year in Wisconsin, we know that at least 9,000 children are victims of serious abuse or neglect. That's unacceptable. When Governor Doyle appointed me Secretary of Health and Family Services last year, he made it clear that protecting children from abuse and neglect must be a critical priority for our department and our state.

We can and we must do more to *prevent* abuse and neglect in the first place. We can and we must do more to *effectively help* kids who have been abused or neglected, to prevent the reoccurrence of damage. We must work to help troubled families better care for their own children to the extent that is possible. However, when it is necessary, we must take prompt, caring action to place children in safe, stable homes through effective foster care and adoption services.

As the former Director of Human Services for Dane County, I am well aware that the state-county child welfare system needs improvement. Like me, county child welfare leaders around the state will welcome systematic efforts to upgrade our efforts to care for children better.

Wisconsin has just received a new federal report that helps us understand the strengths and weaknesses of the child welfare system. Wisconsin is the 43<sup>rd</sup> state to undergo a Child and Family Services Review, a new federal process to evaluate all states child welfare and foster care programs. The review looked at data and system performance in 2001 and 2002 and a small sampling of cases and on-site interviews in Kenosha, Milwaukee and Outagamie Counties. The federal report provides helpful benchmarks for us to measure the progress we must make – and have already begun to make – to serve children and families better.

No state, including Wisconsin, has been found “in substantial conformity” with the federal standards. The report gives specific indications of areas needing work to improve the safety, permanence, and well being of children who have been abused or neglected, and children who are at risk of maltreatment.

As we work to improve our system, we need to take into account the reality that families have complex problems. Many families involved in the child welfare system have been affected by domestic violence, low-wage jobs or unemployment, lower educational levels, crime victimization, depression, alcohol and drug addiction, health problems, learning disabilities, and other challenges. The ability of parents and children to weather these storms is often dependent on how many problems they are facing simultaneously and, too often, on their financial status and access to community supports and services.

The federal review is an imperfect measure of Wisconsin's performance in child welfare. It does not address certain critical elements of child welfare, such as Wisconsin's Kinship Care program (a significant part of our out-of-home care for children). In some cases, ratings do not reflect progress made since the data from 2001 and 2002. For example, we did not meet the federal adoption requirement despite an 80% increase in adoptions since 1999, and two successive years of record numbers of children adopted.

However, to focus on the imperfections in the federal review would be to miss the point. As one evaluation of our work, it represents an opportunity to learn about past performance and to reaffirm Wisconsin's commitment to protecting our smallest and most vulnerable citizens.

Child Protective Services can only be successful when we approach child safety as a well-coordinated effort that connects community response systems that protect children. We must listen harder when families tell us what they need. We need a coordinated effort from community-wide teams to get the best safety outcomes for their kids. Our partners are law enforcement, judges, district attorneys and corporation counsel, mental and physical health care providers, attorneys, educators, community agencies, domestic violence service providers, and others. At its best, our team will support the commitment and participation from moms, dads, grandparents and relatives, foster and adoptive families, and concerned citizens.

Substantive change in Wisconsin child welfare has already begun in state, county, and tribal child welfare agencies. There is great momentum to build a statewide response to the federal review. In August of 2003, the Department began an extraordinary collaboration with counties and tribes to develop a plan to improve child welfare. Based on common goals and values, we will also work together to *implement* these plans.

We appreciate that we have many other partners. We will work with the Legislature to address the challenges that can be met through statutory change. Wisconsin's child welfare Training Partnerships will help us strengthen our child welfare practice to become more family-centered and family-responsive. In respectful collaboration with sovereign tribes, we will ensure that the traditions and connection of Indian children and all children are honored and sustained to the best of our ability. We will collaborate with courts and many other partners across systems. We will work to increase support for the foster and adoptive families that nurture and sustain our children when the child's home is not a safe place for them. And finally, we will recognize and support the incredible effort and commitment that child welfare staff in Wisconsin communities bring to families every day.

As you review the report, you will see that there is much for us to do. It is work vital to Wisconsin's children now. It will benefit all Wisconsin for generations to come. Thank you for your interest and commitment to the future of children.

-- Helene Nelson, Secretary  
Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services  
February 2004

## **Child Welfare in Wisconsin: A Report on Wisconsin's Federal Child and Family Services Review**

### **Part I. Executive Report**

#### **A. Introduction**

This report provides an overview of the federal Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) conducted in Wisconsin in August 2003, using data from 2001 and case reviews from 2003. Our report provides an executive summary of the CFSR findings in the context of the child welfare system in Wisconsin and a preview of what these findings mean for child welfare services in our state. Specific findings are detailed in the Report's Part II, Technical Appendix, which is attached.

#### **B. Background: Child Welfare in Wisconsin**

##### *Mission and Goals*

Wisconsin is committed to protecting children who have been abused and neglected, as well as children who are at risk of such maltreatment. Seventy-one (71) counties, the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare, and eleven (11) tribes are designated child protective services (CPS) agencies. They receive and respond to approximately 40,000 reports of alleged child maltreatment each year. Each report is screened and those that are consistent with a suspicion that abuse or neglect has occurred or is likely to occur are assigned to a CPS caseworker. Reports with information that support a concern that a child is in imminent danger receive an immediate response. For every report that is screened in for further assessment, a safety assessment of the family is conducted to determine if any child in the family is in need of immediate protection, and a determination is made as to what may be needed to ensure the child's safety in the longer term.

##### *The CPS Response to Child Maltreatment*

When child safety concerns are identified, but the child is not in immediate danger, CPS may offer voluntary in-home services. These services, provided with the family's consent, are aimed at strengthening the family and reducing the problems that led to the report. If necessary, the CPS agency may seek court intervention to support family compliance with these services to keep the child safe at home. However, when a CPS agency believes that a child's safety at home cannot be assured, it may ask the court to order removal of the child from the family home and placement of the child in temporary out-of-home care. While the child is in out-of-home care, CPS works with families to reduce risk factors so that the child can return home safely. A family case plan is developed, which details the actions families need to take to protect their children and the services to be provided by the CPS and other community agencies to assist the family in meeting the goals of the case plan and the requirements of the court orders. Services may include alcohol or drug treatment, mental health services, home visitation, parenting

education, home management, individual and family counseling, transportation and other supportive services, referrals and service coordination for the parent or child, or some combination of these approaches.

Children who are removed from their homes to assure their safety are placed temporarily in out-of-home care. This may include placement with a relative (either in relative foster care or through Kinship Care), in foster care with a non-relative family, or in a group home, residential care center, or a “treatment” foster placement that provides more intensive services for children who need them. When children are removed from their homes, CPS agencies strive to reunite them with their families, while at the same time developing an alternative plan for a permanent home in case the parent cannot adequately protect the child. If efforts to safely reunify the family are not successful, legal rights to continue to parent the child may be terminated either voluntarily or involuntarily through a legal process (known as Termination of Parental Rights or TPR). Following TPR, children are usually placed for adoption. CPS casework with these children, their families and their foster parents requires education, training, judgment, understanding, tolerance for stress, and a commitment to the mission.

#### *How Wisconsin differs from other states in its approach to child welfare services*

While most states directly operate child welfare programs, there are ten (10) states (California, Colorado, Maryland, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Virginia) that have a primarily county-operated, state-supervised system. Wisconsin is a hybrid of these two approaches. With the exception of Milwaukee County and our state’s Special Needs Adoption Program, each of Wisconsin’s 71 counties is individually responsible for providing and managing services for abused and neglected children. For those counties, the role of the state child welfare agency is to support and provide technical assistance on child welfare practice, to establish guidelines and policies, and to provide federal dollars to partially fund local practice. All county child welfare agencies also invest local tax levy in their child welfare programs, and most contribute operating dollars that exceed the federal contribution.

#### *Child Welfare in Milwaukee County*

Since 1998, the Division of Children and Family Services of the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services has been directly responsible for providing CPS and child welfare services in Milwaukee County. The creation of the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare was precipitated by a federal lawsuit filed in 1993 by the New York based Children’s Rights, Inc. The plaintiff alleged that the Milwaukee County child welfare system was not adequately protecting children and helping them to secure safe and permanent homes.

The suit was settled in September 2002 through an agreement between Children’s Rights, Inc. and the State of Wisconsin. The settlement requires limits on the number of families caseworkers may carry on their caseloads; monitoring and enforcement of contracts with vendor agencies regarding standards, such as the frequency of contact with children in out-of-home care; and achievement of a variety of performance measures, such as achieving permanent placements for children who cannot return home in a timely manner. The Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare has completed its first year of operations under the Settlement Agreement and will issue progress reports in the spring of 2004.

## C. Child and Family Services Review

### *Background and Overview: The CFSR Process*

In 2003, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services/Administration for Children and Families began conducting a first-time national effort to evaluate states' child welfare systems. The process incorporated newly established federal criteria for child outcomes and system processes. This evaluation, called the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR), included an on-site review of a small sample of cases in Wisconsin in August 2003, as well as earlier activities focusing on 2001 statewide data. The CFSR examines safety, permanency and well-being outcomes for children, as well as systemic factors related to child welfare system's capacity to effectively serve children and families.

The report has just been completed. Wisconsin, the 43<sup>rd</sup> state in the nation to undergo the review process, was found to be "in substantial nonconformance" with many of the newly established federal criteria, as were the 42 other states reviewed to date. As a result, Wisconsin and the other states will work with the federal government to prepare a formal plan to improve outcomes for children and families by improving services and systems.

### *What outcomes and systemic factors were reviewed?*

The CFSR reviewed the State's performance on seven child outcome measures and seven system measures. The seven child outcome measures were organized around three key outcomes of interest - safety, permanency (stable homes and family ties) and overall child well being. Systemic factors examined in the CFSR are related to system efficiency, effectiveness and infrastructure for oversight. For each outcome measure and systemic factor, specific and measurable indicators, or "performance items," were developed.

The child outcomes and systemic factors include:

#### Child Outcome Measure: Safety

Safety Outcome 1	Children are first and foremost protected from abuse and neglect.
Safety Outcome 2	Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible and appropriate.

#### Child Outcome Measure: Permanency

Permanency Outcome 1	Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.
Permanency Outcome 2	Continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.

#### Child Outcome Measure: Well-being

Well-being Outcome 1	Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.
Well-being Outcome 2	Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.
Well-being Outcome 3	Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

### Systemic Factors

- Statewide Information System
- Case Review System
- Quality Assurance
- Staff and Provider Training
- Service Array
- Responsiveness to Community
- Foster & Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention

### *What Data Sources Were Used?*

Data sources for the review included a state self-assessment using federal criteria and statewide outcome data collected in 2001. In addition, on-site case reviews were conducted for 2003, using a random sample of 50 cases in three counties selected as representative of the state. Finally, the review team conducted interviews and focus groups with a variety of stakeholder groups at the state level and in each of the three selected counties.

Wisconsin's conformance on each of the child outcome measures and systemic factors is based on the following information:

- Child Outcome measures: Case review results and statewide outcome data
- Systemic factors: State self-assessment and federal team interviews with stakeholders

### *What Counties Were Included in the Review?*

The three counties selected to represent the state for the on-site case review were Kenosha, Milwaukee, and Outagamie. Milwaukee, the state's largest county, was required to be included in the review. Kenosha and Outagamie Counties were selected based on caseloads large enough to draw case samples, local outcomes typical of statewide patterns, and their proximity to Milwaukee, where federal staff were headquartered.

### *How Were the Reviews Conducted?*

Teams of federal and state reviewers at each of the three county locations conducted the on-site data collection process. The federal team members included federal staff and peer reviewers from other states. The state team members represented various disciplines, including state and county child welfare experts, judges, attorneys, service providers and advocates.

### *What Was the Case Review Process?*

A random sample of fifty (50) cases was drawn from the three counties (26 from Milwaukee County and 12 each from Kenosha and Outagamie Counties), and included both in-home and out-of-home placement cases. Out-of-home placement cases included a mix of child protective services, juvenile justice, and adoption cases. The individual case reviews included a case file analysis as well as interviews with the family, the caseworker, service providers, out-of-home care providers, and legal advocates.



### *Substantial Conformance: What Does This Mean?*

Substantial conformance was defined differently for child outcome measures and for systemic factors. To be found in “substantial conformance” with an outcome measure overall, three criteria were used:

- 90 percent of cases reviewed must have met the specified outcome.
- National performance standards must have been met for those outcomes for which such standards applied. The two specific outcomes for which national performance standards were applied are *Safety Outcome 1* (“Children are first and foremost protected from abuse and neglect”) and *Permanency Outcome 1* (“Children have permanency and stability in their living situations”).
- Indicators associated with a specified outcome must have been rated a “strength;” i.e., to be rated a “strength,” 85 percent of cases must have met the indicator’s performance criteria.

For systemic factors, a rating scale of 1 to 4 was used, with a rating of 3 or 4 indicating conformance. The numeric ratings were based on the proportion of specific related indicators that achieved a “strength” rating.

In each instance where the state is found not to be in conformance, a plan must be developed to address how it will improve performance so as to meet or show progress towards meeting standards within the next two years.

## **D. Results of Wisconsin’s Child and Family Services Review**

This section presents overall results of Wisconsin’s performance on the CFSR. Detailed information regarding each performance item is included in the Technical Appendix. While a detailed State response will be forthcoming, this section also presents a brief explanation of key findings.

### *1. Child Outcomes*

Wisconsin was in substantial conformance with one of the seven identified child outcomes in the areas of safety, permanency and well being: Child Well Being Outcome 2, *Children receive services to meet their educational needs*, with a rating of 90.0 percent. The State was close to conformance on Safety Outcome 2, *Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible and appropriate*, with a rating of 83.3 percent. While the state fell short of conformance on the other outcome measures, there were noted areas of strength, which provide a foundation for improvement. (Overall ratings are presented in the Technical Report.)

### Strengths

The state received a “strength” rating on four of the 23 specific performance items that comprise indicators for safety, permanence and well being:

- *Risk of harm - managing the risk of harm to a child.*  
The risk of harm was sufficiently assessed and managed by providing appropriate assessment and services to children and families in their homes or in foster care or by removing children from home when safety could not be assured.

- *Proximity of placement.*  
Children removed from their homes were placed in the same community or county as their families of origin.
- *Worker visits with child - frequency of caseworker visits to the child.*  
Contacts with children generally occurred at least monthly and focused on case planning, service delivery and permanency goal achievement.
- *Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.*  
Children's educational needs were assessed and addressed appropriately.

Areas Needing Improvement:

Wisconsin was not in substantial conformance with six of the seven outcomes for child safety, permanence and well being. Outcomes needing improvement include:

- *Safety Outcome 1: Children are first and foremost protected from abuse and neglect*  
Local agencies are not consistent in responding to maltreatment reports and establishing face-to-face contact in accordance with the required timeframes established by agency policy. Notably, the State's rate for recurrence of maltreatment and for maltreatment while in care exceeds the federal performance standards.
- *Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible and appropriate*  
Services offered were not sufficient to ensure children's safety while they remain in the home and, in some cases, children are not being removed when risk of harm was present.
- *Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations*  
Wisconsin meets national standards for the re-entry to care, reunification or adoption, but did not meet the national standard for the percentage of children in foster care for 12 months or less who experienced no more than two placement settings. The timeliness of achieving permanency for children is affected by the lack of effective concurrent planning and delays in finalizing adoptions.
- *Permanency Outcome 2: Continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children*  
Although local agencies made concerted efforts to place children in close proximity to their parents or close relatives, the agencies are less consistent in their efforts to place siblings together, ensure frequent visitation between children, parents and siblings, and seek relatives as placement resources.

- *Well being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs*

Local agencies are not consistent with regard to their efforts to assess needs and provide services to children, parents and foster parents; involve children and parents in case planning; or establish face-to-face contact with parents that is of sufficient frequency and quality to ensure children's safety or promote attainment of case goals.

- *Well being Outcome 3: Children received adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs*

Children are not receiving mental health assessments even when the nature of the maltreatment, the dynamics of the family and the family and child's history indicate that a mental health assessment is warranted.

### State Response

In general, many of these findings can be attributed to three major weaknesses in the State's child welfare system: staff workloads, inconsistency in staff training levels, poor documentation of case activities, and limited availability of statewide quality assurance and technical assistance support to child welfare agencies.

## *2. Systemic Factors*

The State achieved a rating of substantial conformance for three of the seven systemic factors, as indicated in Table 6 in the Technical Appendix:

- Statewide information system
- Agency responsiveness to community
- Foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment and retention

These systemic factors included 23 specific performance items that are evaluated as part of the case reviews. The ratings for the specific performance items are presented in Table X of the Technical Appendix.

### Strengths:

The State achieved a "strength" rating on 11 of the 23 items:

- *System can identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals of children in out-of-home care*

Wisconsin's Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (WiSACWIS) identifies and collects information needed to track children in our child welfare system.

- *Process for 6 and 12 month case reviews.*

Reviews required to meet the permanency goals for children are being scheduled and held as they should.

- *Standards to ensure quality services and ensure children safety and health.*

Wisconsin has developed and implemented both initial investigative standards and ongoing service standards to support quality child welfare practice.

- *Ability to individualize services to meet unique needs.*  
Wisconsin has a network of service providers who work in collaboration with local agencies and the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare to individualize services to meet the needs of children and families.
- *Develops annual progress reports in consultation with stakeholders.*  
Wisconsin develops annual reports of progress and services in conjunction with representatives of its Child Welfare Executive Steering Committee. State and local agencies are involved in collaborative structures for program planning.
- *Coordinates services with other federally-assisted programs.*  
Wisconsin has created or is developing several initiatives that support coordination of services among a wide array of entities including its Coordinated Services Team initiative, managed health care initiative for children in out-of-home care, and its Child Protective Service/Domestic Violence coordination initiative.
- *Standards for foster family and child care institutions exist to protect child safety.*  
Wisconsin has established standards for licensing providers, including foster homes, treatment foster homes, group homes and residential care centers. Standards for foster family and child care institutions are equally applied and necessary criminal background checks are conducted.
- *Diligent recruitment of foster and adoptive families that reflect children's racial and ethnic diversity.*  
Wisconsin has established a culturally responsive, joint effort between the counties, private child-placing agencies and the state.

#### Areas Needing Improvement:

Wisconsin was not in substantial conformance with four of the seven systemic outcomes for effective operation of its child welfare system. Outcomes needing improvement are listed below, with a brief explanatory note.

- *Case Review System*  
Families are not effectively involved in the review of case plans. The Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) process is not being consistently implemented in accordance with the provisions of the Adoption and Safe Families Act. Wisconsin also does not consistently notify tribe regarding reviews and hearings for Indian children.
- *Quality Assurance System*  
Wisconsin lacks the capacity to evaluate the quality of services including child welfare practice, provide relevant reports or evaluate the implementation of program improvement measures.
- *Staff and Provider Training*  
Child welfare agencies do not ensure that all new caseworkers receive the initial and ongoing training necessary to perform their duties. Wisconsin does not have statewide requirements for staff to participate in initial or ongoing training. Foster parent training is not consistent statewide.

- *Service Array*  
Wisconsin lacks an array of services to address the needs of children and families that will enable children to remain safely with their parents when possible, and to help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency.

## **E. Wisconsin's Response: The Program Enhancement Plan**

### *Process*

Wisconsin must develop a Program Enhancement Plan (PEP) to address the six outcome factors and four systemic factors for which the state was found to be in substantial nonconformance. The PEP must establish measurable goals for improving child welfare program outcomes and systemic aspects of program capacity to deliver services. The program improvement goals will be statewide in scope. The action steps in the PEP must be implemented over a two-year period and, over that period, the state must show progress toward the improvement goals.

Because Wisconsin is committed to improving its child welfare system, in September of 2003, the Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) formed a team to identify underlying causes for performance issues, suggest strategies to improve performance, and assist in developing the PEP. The Team, composed of representatives from counties, tribes, agency partners, and advocates, will continue to meet through the completion of the PEP, which must be submitted by April 13, 2004. Based on the experience of other states, there will be negotiations with federal staff to finalize the program improvement goals and action steps in the PEP. The improvement goals can be renegotiated during the improvement period.

The approval date for the PEP establishes the beginning of the two-year improvement period. Following the end of the two-year period, the federal government will conduct a follow-up CFSR review to assess the extent of system improvements, likely to occur in 2007. The locations for the follow-up review will include Milwaukee County and two other counties.

Financial penalties can be assessed against the funds received by the state under Titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act for areas of continued nonconformance if program improvement goals are not realized. Penalties begin at one percent (1%) per item, which would be approximately \$150,000 per item for Wisconsin. At Wisconsin's current level of non-conformity, this represents approximately \$1.5 million. The penalty status continues until the state achieves conformance with the program improvement goal(s). Penalties are not instituted during the implementation of the PEP if the state is making sufficient progress on the program improvement goals. The penalty can increase two percent (2%) and then three percent (3%) per item if nonconformance continues to exist following subsequent federal reviews. Penalties for nonconformance are withheld during the initial program improvement period.

### *Content*

The Wisconsin PEP document will include four components:

1. A general information section with key contact person information.
2. A written work plan detailing the work to be undertaken under the PEP.

3. An agreement form indicating federal and state approval of the PEP.
4. A tracking matrix that summarizes the components of the PEP initially (that is, provides a baseline) and permits tracking of progress and completion dates through quarterly status reports.

The following specific information must be included in the PEP:

- A measurable goal of improvement, action steps, and a timeline for addressing each outcome area found not to be in substantial conformance with national standards.
- A specific percentage of improvement goal that will be achieved by the end of the PEP period for each of the statewide aggregate data indicators that does not meet the national standards. If the degree of progress to be achieved during the PEP period is not sufficient to reach the established national standard, the degree of progress negotiated between the ACF Regional Office and the state must be significant enough to move the state toward conformance with the national standards in a reasonable amount of time.
- A measurable goal of improvement, action steps, and a timeline for addressing each systemic factor found not to be in substantial conformance with national standards. The PEP must address the federal requirements that were not met and that therefore contributed to a determination of nonconformance for each systemic factor.
- The identity and function of the individual or party responsible for undertaking each action step.
- Specification of the geographic areas of the state in which the action steps will be undertaken and an explanation of how the PEP activities will lead to positive outcomes and conformance with the systemic factors statewide.
- A plan for evaluating the implementation of the provisions of the PEP, including benchmarks of progress and other evidence that goals have been achieved.
- A description of the state's plan for accessing technical assistance through the federally-funded, national resource centers to support program improvements.

Pursuant to federal expectations, DCFS will coordinate the development and implementation of the PEP with the Court Improvement Plan program located in the Office of the Director of State Courts.

## **F. Next Steps: Wisconsin's Progress Toward Its Program Enhancement Plan**

While the PEP is a federal compliance document and must therefore include specific elements that are federally required, Wisconsin's plan will focus on the strategies that matter the most to children. Together with all of the partners in the child welfare system – counties, tribes, courts and many others – the State will concentrate its efforts to:

- Support increased capacity for local CPS agencies and CPS workers to implement best practices in child welfare, so they can act more consistently and in a more timely manner to achieve safety, permanency and well being of children.
- Help families to better care for their own children when they can, by offering the right services in family-friendly ways.
- Act more quickly to place children in high quality foster and adoptive homes, where doing so is appropriate.
- Set priorities and better focus current resources, and selectively increase resources over time.

Finally, while the PEP does not include a look at the state's efforts to prevent child abuse in the first place, Wisconsin will give priority to our prevention strategies at the same time we use the PEP as an opportunity to strengthen interventions when children are abused.

Much important work has already begun in a number of Wisconsin counties to improve child welfare outcomes. The Technical Appendix highlights progress that has been made by the three counties that were the subject of the CFSR (Milwaukee, Kenosha, and Outagamie) as well as statewide by the Division of Children and Family Services in consultation with counties and tribes.

These are challenging times, but Wisconsin's commitment to improving child welfare is shared by county, state, tribal, and private agency child welfare professionals at all levels. Together, we will shape a child welfare system that effectively and efficiently assures safety and permanence for children.

## Part II. Technical Appendix

### A. Introduction and Overview

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services/Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted a comprehensive review of Wisconsin's child welfare program in August 2003, the Child and Family Services Review, or CFSR. The CFSR is a nationwide quality assurance effort to determine states' level of compliance with federal law and regulations, especially Titles IV-B (child welfare services) and IV-E (foster care and adoption assistance) of the Social Security Act. Wisconsin was the forty-third (43<sup>rd</sup>) state to undergo the CFSR review and, like all preceding states, it was found in substantial non-conformance.

The CFSR review process examined fourteen aspects of the child welfare program, including seven outcome measures relating to children's safety, permanence, and well-being, and seven systemic factors relating to the state's overall capacity to serve children and families. The review process included a state self-assessment, analysis of statewide outcome data, on-site review of fifty cases in three counties, and interviews and focus groups with a variety of stakeholders.

This companion to *Part I: Executive Report*, provides detailed information regarding the State's performance on the CFSR, including a summary of ratings associated with each of its forty-five performance items. For those performance items rated as "needs improvement," a state response will be developed and incorporated in a plan to improve outcomes, as part of the State's response to the federal government.

This detailed analysis is followed by a summary of key initiatives undertaken by the State and the evaluated counties since the review was conducted in August 2003. The process being used to develop the State's Program Enhancement Plan (PEP), which is a federally required compliance document, is described and a list of those individuals participating in its development attached.

Wisconsin's plan will go beyond the requirements of the State's response to the federal government. The State will focus its planning on the strategies that matter the most to children. Together with all of its partners in the child welfare system – counties, tribes, courts and many others – the State will concentrate its efforts to support and improve services to children in local communities, setting priorities to better focus these services.

### B. Child Outcome Ratings

In this section, findings related to the child outcome measures, standards and performance items are presented. An explanatory response to each performance item in need of improvement is provided.

#### *Overall Ratings*

As noted in the Executive Report, Wisconsin did not achieve substantial conformance on six of the seven outcome measures included in the CFSR. Table 1 provides specific ratings achieved for each.



<b>Table 1. Ratings for Safety, Permanence, and Well-Being Outcomes</b>			
<b>Outcome Title</b>	<b>Outcome Description</b>	<b>Percent Achieved</b>	<b>Substantial Conformance</b>
Safety Outcome 1	Children are first and foremost protected from abuse and neglect	79.1	No
Safety Outcome 2	Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible and appropriate	83.3	No
Permanency Outcome 1	Children have permanency and stability in their living situations	48.0	No
Permanency Outcome 2	The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved	44.0	No
Well-Being Outcome 1	Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children's needs	54.0	No
Well-Being Outcome 2	Children receive services to meet their educational needs	90.9	Yes
Well-Being Outcome 3	Children receive services to meet their physical and mental health needs	68.8	No

### *National Standards*

National standards were set for six measures in two of the seven Child Outcome Measures. Wisconsin met national standards for one of these six measures, as noted in Table 2. Asterisked items indicate that the rate is an estimate, based on available data sources.

<b>Table 2. Wisconsin Achievement of National Performance Standards</b>			
<b>Performance Standards</b>	<b>National Standard (Percent)</b>	<b>WI Data 2001 (Percent)</b>	<b>Met Performance Standard</b>
<b>Safety Outcome 1 – Recurrence of Maltreatment</b> Of all children who were victims of substantiated maltreatment report in the first 6 months of 2001, what percent were victims of another substantiated report within a 6-month period?	6.1 or less	6.9 *	No
<b>Safety Outcome 1 – Maltreatment While in Care</b> Of all children in out-of-home care in first 9 months of 2001, what percent experienced maltreatment by foster parents or facility staff members?	0.57 or less	0.61 *	No
<b>Permanency Outcome 1 – Re-entry to Care</b> Of all children who entered out-of-home care in 2001, what percent were re-entering care within 12 months of a prior out-of-home care episode?	8.6 or less	25.5	No

<b>Table 2. Wisconsin Achievement of National Performance Standards</b>			
<b>Permanency Outcome 1 – Timely Reunification</b> Of all children reunified from out-of-home care in 2001, what percent were reunified within 12 months of entry into out-of-home care?	76.2 or more	71.0	No
<b>Permanency Outcome 1 – Timely Adoption</b> Of all children adopted from out-of-home care in 2001, what percent were adopted within 24 months of their entry into out-of-home care?	32.0 or more	21.2 *	No
<b>Permanency Outcome 1 – Placement Stability</b> Of all children in out-of-home care during 2001 for less than 12 months, what percent experienced no more than 2 placement settings?	86.7 or more	93.8	Yes

### *Performance Items*

There were 23 performance items associated with the seven child outcomes. For four of the 23 items, Wisconsin merited a “strength” rating, as indicated in Table 3 below. A “strength” rating meant that 85 percent of cases reviewed met the standard for that item. Table 3 is followed by a detailed response to each performance item.

<b>Table 3. Ratings for Child Outcome Performance Items 1 - 23</b>				
<b>Outcome Factor</b>	<b>Item #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Strength *</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
SO-1	1	Timeliness of CPS investigations		X
SO-1	2	Repeat maltreatment		X
SO-2	3	Services to prevent removal		X
SO-2	4	Risk of harm	X	
PO-1	5	Out-of-home care re-entry		X
PO-1	6	Stability of out-of-home care placements		X
PO-1	7	Permanency goal for child		X
PO-1	8	Reunification, guardianship, and placement with relatives		X
PO-1	9	Adoption		X
PO-1	10	Other planned living arrangement		X
PO-2	11	Proximity of placement	X	
PO-2	12	Placement with siblings		X
PO-2	13	Visiting with parents and siblings in out-of-home care		X
PO-2	14	Preserving connections		X
PO-2	15	Relative placement		X
PO-2	16	Relationship of child in care with parents		X
WBO-1	17	Needs/services of child, parents, and foster parents		X
WBO-1	18	Child/family involvement in case planning		X
WBO-1	19	Worker visits with child	X	
WBO-1	20	Worker visits with parents		X
WBO-2	21	Educational needs of child	X	
WBO-3	22	Physical health of child		X
WBO-3	23	Mental health of child		X

## ***Specific Responses to Child Outcome Performance Items***

### **1. Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment**

#### ***Strengths and Accomplishments***

- Rated as strength in 14 of 23 cases (4 of the 14 were out-of-home cases).
- Most stakeholders believe that agencies respond to child maltreatment reports in a timely manner.

#### ***Key Performance Issues/Concerns***

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- Rated as needing improvement in 9 of 23 cases (3 of the 9 were out-of-home cases).
- In one of 2 cases where the report was classified “urgent,” the caseworker did not respond for 2 days; in the other case, for which there were 2 urgent ratings, there was no face-to-face contact for 7 days and 12 days, respectively.
- Agencies are not consistent in responding to maltreatment reports and establishing face-to-face contact in accordance with the required timeframes established by agency policy.
- Maltreatment allegations received on open cases are not routinely reported for a formal assessment.

### **2. Repeat maltreatment**

#### ***Strengths and Accomplishments***

- This item was rated as a strength in 95 percent of the cases reviewed.
- Many stakeholders believe that substantiated recurrence is not a significant problem.

#### ***Key Performance Issues/Concerns***

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- WI’s estimated rate of recurrence of maltreatment from its data sources for 2001.
- Maltreatment reports on open cases are not routinely investigated as new cases and are not routinely assessed.
- Several stakeholders voiced concern about agencies’ practice of screening out cases prior to investigation based on information from a specific incident rather than using information about the family’s history in making a determination about the potential risk to the child.
- Stakeholders expressed concern that the criteria for substantiation are not consistent across the state and, in some areas, the criteria are not adequate to ensure children’s safety.
- The state did not meet the national standard for the percentage of children maltreated by foster parents or facility staff.

### **3. Services to families to protect children in home and prevent removal**

#### ***Strengths and Accomplishments***

- Rated as a strength in 31 of 37 cases (10 of the 31 were out-of-home cases).
- Most stakeholders believe that agencies make concerted efforts to prevent removal and that removal, when it occurs, is appropriate.

- Some stakeholders reported that there is an extensive array of services available to prevent placement.
- The review found a long list of services that were provided to families to prevent removal.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.

#### **4. Risk of harm to child**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as a strength overall.
- Rated as a strength in 42 of 49 cases.
- Risk of harm to children was appropriately managed by providing services to families to address risk concerns.
- Risk of harm to children was appropriately managed by removing children from the home.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement in 7 of 49 cases.
- In some cases, the services offered were insufficient to reduce the risk of harm to the child.
- In one case, safety assessment was insufficient to identify underlying problems that contributed to risk.

#### **5. Foster care re-entries**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as a strength in all five reviewed cases.
- None of the cases reviewed identified any problems; however, the state data was in excess of the national standard.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- State data indicated an unacceptably high number of cases of re-entries.

#### **6. Stability of foster care placement**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- This was rated as a strength in 19 of 25 cases.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- This was rated as needing improvement in 6 of 25 cases (children in 8 cases experienced 3 placements and in one case a child experienced 4 placements).
- Lack of adequate placement resources in 2 cases.
- Lack of agency efforts to support a placement in one case.
- Insufficient assessments of a child's needs resulted in inappropriate placements in 2 cases.
- Instability of child's current placement in one case.

- Not enough foster parents who are sufficiently trained to meet the needs of the children.
- Not enough time or resources to conduct appropriate matching of children with foster parents.
- Caseworkers do not always support foster families when problems arise.

## **7. Permanency goal for child**

### *Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as a strength in 15 of 25 cases.

### *Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- Rated as needing improvement in 10 of 25 cases.
- 19 children were in care for more than 15 of 22 months; Termination of Parental Rights (TPRs) filed for only 6 of the 19.
- In the 13 cases where TPR had not been filed, 5 had compelling reasons documented but 8 did not.
- Goal is not appropriate given the needs of the child and circumstances of the case in 5 cases.
- Goal was appropriate, but not established in a timely manner in 5 cases. Court may be biased toward reunification.

## **8. Reunification, Guardianship, or Permanent Placement with Relatives**

### *Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as a strength in 6 of 13 cases.
- Reunification achieved in a timely manner in 4 cases.
- Agency making reasonable efforts to reunify the child in 2 cases.

### *Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- Rated as needing improvement in 7 of 13 cases.
- Agency not making reasonable efforts to achieve reunification in 7 cases.
- Stakeholders noted that the practice of dual licensure of foster/adopt parents results in foster parents who want to adopt the children, and are then reluctant to engage in activities that may help them return to their families of origin.

## **9. Adoption**

### *Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as a strength in 3 of 6 cases.
- In two of the three cases, adoption occurred within 24 months; the third was finalized after child was in care for more than 3 years.

### *Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- Rated as needing improvement in 3 of 6 cases.
- In one case, the child's initial permanence goal was adoption, but no TPR was filed until after 12 months; finalization took another year.

- In some counties, TPR is not sought until after an adoptive resource has been found.
- There is too much emphasis on reunification.
- Lack of legal staff to process TPR petitions.

## **10. Permanency goal of other planned permanent living arrangement**

### *Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as a strength in 5 of 6 cases.
- Some stakeholders believe that independent living programs provide high quality services.

### *Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- Rated as needing improvement in 1 of 6 cases.
- In one case, a 16-year old was receiving independent living services but there was no independent living plan.
- Independent living programs could be improved.
- Some children do not receive sufficient contacts from caseworkers.
- Stakeholders reported that the Independent Living Program services are of good quality, although there was general agreement that improvements were needed in the structure of services provided.

## **11. Proximity of foster care placement**

### *Strengths and Accomplishments*

- This item was rated as a strength in all 25 cases.
- In 16 of 25 cases, children were placed in the same community or county as family of origin. In 9 cases, it was determined that placement farther away was appropriate.

### *Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- This is sometimes hard to achieve because of a lack of resources, especially for special needs children.

## **12. Placement with siblings**

### *Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- In 3 cases, child was placed with all siblings.
- In 4 cases, separation of siblings was determined to be appropriate for safety reasons.

### *Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as a strength in 7 of 14 cases, and as needing improvement in 7 cases.
- Lack of resources is a problem.
- In half of cases, agencies did not make diligent efforts to place siblings together.
- Case reviewers reported that some foster parents said that they were willing to take siblings but they were not asked to do so by caseworkers.

## **13. Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care**

### *Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as a strength in 13 of 24 cases.

- Frequency of visitation met the needs of children in 8 cases.
- Agencies made diligent efforts to have more frequent visitation in 7 cases.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- Rated as needing improvement in 11 of 24 cases.
- Visitation between children and mothers was not sufficient in 4 cases.
- Visitation between children and fathers was not sufficient in 4 cases.
- Visitation between children and siblings was not sufficient in 3 cases.
- In 46% of cases, agencies did not make diligent efforts to facilitate sufficient visitation.

#### **14. Preserving connections**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as a strength in 15 of 24 cases.
- In 15 of 24 cases, connections were significantly preserved.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- Rated as needing improvement in 9 of 24 cases.
- In 7 of 24 cases, connections were partially preserved.
- In 2 of 24 cases, connections were not at all preserved.
- 3 of the cases involved tribal children; in 2 of the 3, the tribe was not notified of the placement in a timely manner.

#### **15. Relative placement**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as strength in 15 of 23 cases.
- Child placed with a relative in 2 cases.
- Agency made diligent efforts to search for both maternal and paternal relatives in 13 cases.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- Rated as needing improvement in 8 of 23 cases.
- Agencies did not make diligent efforts to search for either maternal or paternal relatives in 5 cases.
- Agencies sought paternal relatives but not maternal relatives in 1 case.
- Agencies sought maternal relatives but not paternal relatives in 2 cases.
- Some agencies provide Kinship Care payments but won't license relatives as foster parents.

#### **16. Relationship of child in care with parents**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as strength in 15 of 24 cases.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- Rated as needing improvement in 9 of 24 cases.
- Agencies did not make diligent efforts to promote the child's relationship with the mother in 3 cases, the father in 2 cases, or either parent in 4 cases.

**17. Needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as strength in 29 of 50 cases; 17 of the 29 cases were children in out-of-home care.
- Rated as strength for one juvenile justice case.
- Some stakeholders believe that there are many services available and are matched to the family's needs.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- Rated as needing improvement in 21 of 50 cases; 8 of the 21 cases were children in out-of-home care.
- Rated as needing improvement for 2 juvenile justice cases.
- Services provided were delayed or insufficient to meet family needs in 7 cases.
- Children's needs were not assessed in 6 cases and service needs not met in 3 cases.
- Mother's needs were not assessed in 5 cases and service needs not met in 3 cases.
- Father's needs were not assessed in 10 cases and service needs not met in 4 cases.
- Foster parents' needs were not assessed in 2 cases and their service needs not met in 2 cases.
- Some stakeholders believe that agencies are not consistent in conducting comprehensive needs assessments.
- Most stakeholders agree that there is a lack of assessment of father's service needs.

**18. Child and family involvement in case planning**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as strength in 31 of 50 cases (15 of the 31 were out-of-home care cases).
- Older children are more likely to be involved in case planning.
- Family group counseling is used in some counties.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- Rated as needing improvement in 19 of 50 cases (10 of the 19 were out-of-home care cases).
- Mothers who should have been but were not involved in case planning in 8 of 47 cases.
- Fathers who should have been but were not involved in case planning in 15 of 36 cases.
- Children old enough to participate were not involved in 7 of 31 cases.



- Some stakeholders believe that involvement in case planning is more likely in larger than in smaller counties, but this may not be supported by case reviews.

## **19. Caseworker visits with child**

### *Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as a strength overall.
- Rated as strength in 44 of 50 cases (23 of the 44 were out-of-home care cases).
- Rated as a strength in all 3 juvenile justice cases.
- For out-of-home care cases, 23 of 25 children saw their caseworker at least monthly (9 cases at least every other week).
- For in-home cases, 23 of 25 children saw their caseworker at least monthly (19 cases at least every other week).

### *Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement in 6 of 50 cases (2 of the 6 cases were out-of-home care cases).
- Frequency of caseworker visits not sufficient to meet child's needs, and not focused on case planning, service delivery, and goal attainment in 5 cases.
- Frequency of caseworker visits not sufficient to meet child's needs, but did not focus on case planning, service deliver, or goal attainment in 1 case.

## **20. Worker visits with parents**

### *Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as strength in 35 of 50 cases (18 of the 35 cases were out-of-home cases).
- In 42 of 49 cases, mothers were visited at least monthly.
- In 14 of 36 cases, fathers were visited at least monthly.
- Stakeholders believe that parents have good access to workers.

### *Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- Rated as needing improvement in 15 of 50 cases (7 of the 15 cases were out-of-home cases).
- Visits with both parents were not occurring with sufficient frequency in 8 cases.
- Visits with fathers were not occurring with sufficient frequency in 7 cases.
- Many stakeholders believe that lack of frequency of caseworker contacts is due to high caseloads.

## **21. Educational needs of the child**

### *Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as a strength overall.
- Rated as strength in 30 of 33 cases (19 of the 30 were out-of-home cases).
- In general, children's educational needs are assessed and appropriately addressed.

### *Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement in 3 of 30 cases (2 of the 3 were out-of-home cases).
- There is some inconsistency across agencies in terms of efforts to maintain a child's school placement, especially when a child is placed in out-of-home care.

## 22. Physical health of child

### *Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as strength in 38 of 46 cases (19 of the 38 were out-of-home care).
- Rated as strength in 93% of in-home cases.
- Children's health needs are generally assessed and treated.

### *Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- Rated as needing improvement in 8 of 46 cases (6 of the 8 were out-of-home care).
- Rated as strength in 76% of out-of-home cases.
- Child did not receive appropriate or timely physical health screenings in 2 cases.
- Child did not receive appropriate preventive health or dental care in 2 cases.
- Child did not receive treatment for an identified health or dental need in 4 cases.
- No documentation in file of screenings or health or dental care in 2 cases.
- There is a lack of dentists who are willing to accept Medical Assistance.
- If biological parent retains legal custody, they must consent to most medical treatment.
- County finances have an impact on whether children receive health care.

## 23. Mental health of child

### *Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as strength in 22 of 32 cases (13 of the 22 were out-of-home cases).
- Mental health needs were significantly assessed in 20 cases.
- Identified mental health needs were significantly met in 22 cases.

### *Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- Rated as needing improvement in 10 of 32 cases (5 of the 10 were out-of-home cases).
- Mental health needs were partially assessed in 4 cases and not at all in 7 cases.
- Identified mental health needs were partially met in 2 cases and not at all met in 6 cases.
- Child did not receive a formal mental health assessment when family and child's history indicated that one was warranted in 7 cases.
- Child with mental health needs did not receive ongoing mental health treatment sufficient to meet the needs in 2 cases.
- Problems accessing mental health services in in-home cases because parents do not have insurance or insurance that will adequately cover mental health services.
- There are long waiting lists for mental health assessments.
- Parental consent is required for mental health assessments and services.
- Insufficient number of mental health providers, especially those with expertise in dealing with children.
- No state law or local agency policy mandating formal assessments or evaluations of mental health issues.

### C. Systemic Factors

In this section, we present findings related to system measures and related performance items on which Wisconsin's child welfare services were assessed. A detailed response to each performance item is provided. Table 4 below specifies the seven systemic factors.

<b>Table 4. Systemic Factors</b>	
Information System Capacity	Ability to meet federal reporting requirements and use of data
Case Review System	Written case plans and regular permanency reviews, notification, and hearings
Quality Assurance	State program standards and quality assurance activities
Staff and Provider Training	Training for county agency staff and foster parents
Service Array	Needs assessment and services for children and families statewide
Responsiveness to Community	Sharing information and involving stakeholders
Foster & Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention	Standards for licensing (including criminal background checks) and recruitment and retention activities

#### *Overall Ratings*

As noted in the Executive Report, Wisconsin did not achieve substantial conformance on six of the seven outcome measures included in the CFSR. Table 5 provides specific ratings achieved for each. To be in substantial conformance, a rating of 3 or 4 must have been achieved.

<b>Table 5. Ratings for Systemic Factors</b>		
<b>Systemic Factor</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>In Substantial Conformance</b>
1. Statewide Information System	3	Yes
2. Case Review System	2	No
3. Quality Assurance System	2	No
4. Staff and Provider Training	2	No
5. Service Array	2	No
6. Agency Responsiveness to Community	3	Yes
7. Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention	3	Yes

Table 6 below specifies ratings received for each of the twenty-two performance items associated with systemic factors. The table is followed by detailed information on each of the performance items.

<b>Table 6. Ratings for Performance Items</b>				
<b>Systemic Factor</b>	<b>Item #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Strength</b>	<b>Need Improvement</b>
SF-1	24	System can identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals of children in out-of-home care	X	
SF-2	25	Process for developing a case plan and for joint case planning with parents		X
SF-2	26	Process for 6-month case reviews	X	
SF-2	27	Process for 12-mnth case reviews	X	
SF-2	28	Process for seeking TPR in accordance with ASFA		X
SF-2	29	Process for notifying caregivers of reviews and hearings and for opportunity for them to be heard		X
SF-3	30	Standards to ensure quality services and ensure children safety and health	X	
SF-3	31	Identifiable QA system that evaluates the quality of services and improvements		X
SF-4	32	Provision of initial staff training		X
SF-4	33	Provision of ongoing staff training that addresses the necessary skills and knowledge		X
SF-4	34	Provision of training for caregivers and adoptive parents that addresses the necessary skills and knowledge		X
SF-5	35	Availability of array of critical services		X
SF-5	36	Accessibility of services across all jurisdictions		X
SF-5	37	Ability to individualize services to meet unique needs	X	
SF-6	38	Engages in ongoing consultation with critical stakeholders in developing the Child and Family Services State Plan		X
SF-6	39	Develops annual progress reports in consultation with stakeholders	X	
SF-6	40	Coordinates services with other federal programs	X	
SF-7	41	Standards for foster family and child care institutions	X	
SF-7	42	Standards are applied equally to all foster family and child care institutions	X	
SF-7	43	Conducts necessary criminal background checks	X	
SF-7	44	Diligent recruitment of foster and adoptive families that reflect children's racial and ethnic diversity	X	
SF-7	45	Uses cross-jurisdictional resources to find placements		X

**24. State is operating a statewide information system that, at a minimum, can readily identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for the placement of every child who is in out-of-home care.**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as a strength overall because of the Wisconsin Statewide Automated Child Welfare System WiSACWIS). WiSACWIS strengthens organizational practices (e.g., assigning cases, notifying caseworkers, adhering to timelines, approving case and permanency plans).

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Not all counties are currently using WiSACWIS, but statewide rollout will be completed by June 2004
- The legacy data system (that pre-dates WiSACWIS) has limited information and there have been problems with conversion of data to the new system
- Some stakeholders indicated that WiSACWIS is time-consuming, data has been lost due to technical problems and the standardized reports are not meaningful.

**25. Provides a process that ensures that each child has a written case plan to be developed jointly with the child's parent(s) that includes the required provisions.**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Most children have case plans.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- Fathers are rarely involved in developing case plans even when their location is known.
- The level of involvement of parents is often a result of the skills and approach of the caseworker.
- In 38% of cases reviewed, it was determined that parents and children had not been adequately involved in the case planning process.

**26. Provides a process for the periodic review of the status of each child, no less frequently than once every 6 months, either by a court or by an administrative review body.**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as a strength overall.
- Recent statutory changes facilitated timely reviews.
- Some stakeholders have reported recent improvements in the quality of reviews.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- There is still some confusion about the recent changes in the law.
- In some counties, reviews are delayed because of high caseloads.

**27. Provides a process that ensures that each child in out-of-home care and under the supervision of the state have a permanency hearing conducted in a qualified court or administrative body no later than 12 months from the date the child entered out-of-home care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter.**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as a strength overall.
- Extensive training was provided to a wide variety of child welfare professionals on the new law.
- Model court forms were developed and released in the fall of 2002.
- Juvenile bench book has been updated to support judicial operations.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Occasionally hearings are delayed due to problems with court scheduling, but this is not a major issue.
- Some stakeholders indicated that there are court-related problems that affect the timeliness and quality of court hearings, including scheduling delays, lack of legal representation for parents, the practice of judicial rotation, and variation in judicial awareness of ASFA permanency requirements.

**28. Provides a process for termination of parental rights proceedings in accordance with the provisions of the Adoption and Safe Families Act.**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

None Specified.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- TPR process is not being consistently implemented in accordance with ASFA provisions due to court- and agency-related delays in both filing for TPR and attaining TPR.
- There are a number of philosophical, educational, and operational challenges that impact the TPR process, including: late filings by the agency; staff shortages among district attorneys, public defenders, and agency attorneys; right to a jury trial; lengthy TPR process; general focus on reunification; and an unwillingness to file a TPR if an adoptive resource has not been identified.
- Some children are viewed as “unadoptable.”

**29. Provides a process for foster parents, preadoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in out-of-home care to be notified of, and have an opportunity to be heard in, any review or hearing held with respect to the child.**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Some stakeholders noted that these notifications do occur.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- Process for notifying foster parents is not timely or consistent across the state.
- Stakeholders noted the lack of timely information to tribes regarding reviews and hearings.
- Because of a lack of a quality assurance system, it is unknown whether notifications are being made.
- Some stakeholders indicated that notice is being made of the 6-month reviews but not of the 12-month hearings.
- Some stakeholders indicated that notification occurs but the opportunity for caregivers to be heard varies from one court to another.
- Some foster parents are not comfortable with the process and thus do not make themselves heard.

**30. The state has developed and implemented standards to ensure that children in out-of-home care are provided quality services that protect the safety and health of the children.**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated a strength overall.
- State has both investigation and ongoing service standards.
- Stakeholders indicated that agencies are following the standards.

### **Key Performance Issues/Concerns**

None Specified.

- 31. The state is operating an identifiable quality assurance system that is in place in the jurisdictions where the services included in the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) are provided, evaluates the quality of services, identifies strengths and needs of the service delivery system, provides relevant reports, and evaluates program improvement measures implemented.**

#### *Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Some agencies have their own quality assurance (QA) practices.
- QA staff are included in the Adoption Program.
- The Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (BMCW) has a formal and integrated QA process.
- DCFS does have limited QA capacity through the Office of Program Review and Audit, Bureau of Programs and Policies staff, regional office staff, and the Office of Policy, Evaluation and Planning.
- When all counties are on WiSACWIS, there will be greater standardization of practice and more systemic efforts for ongoing QA.

#### *Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- DCFS does not have a QA system that has the capacity to evaluate the quality of services, provide relevant reports, or evaluate the implementation of program improvement measures.
- Stakeholders indicated there is no comprehensive, statewide QA system.
- Limited financial and human resources significantly hamper efforts to conduct ongoing QA, including support and technical assistance, and program and outcome monitoring.

- 32. The state is operating a staff development and training program that supports the goals and objectives in the CFSP, addresses services provided under Titles IV-B and IV-E, and provides initial training for all staff who deliver these services.**

#### *Strengths and Accomplishments*

- The state has a collaborative approach to training among the state, counties, the four Wisconsin Training Partnerships, tribes, and universities.
- BMCW has training requirements that must be met prior to a caseworker having a caseload, although there is question about whether this requirement is being met.

#### *Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- The collaborative approach noted above does not ensure that caseworkers in all agencies receive the initial training necessary to provide services that support the goals and objectives of the CFSP.
- Caseworkers are assigned caseloads before completion of any training program.
- There is no state mandate regarding the amount of training required for staff.

**33. The state provides for ongoing training for staff that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to the services included in the CFSP.**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Training is available through the Training Partnerships, but child welfare training is not required.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- The collaborative approach noted above does not ensure that caseworkers in all agencies receive the initial training necessary to provide services that support the goals and objectives of the CFSP.
- Continuing training is not available to all caseworkers and supervisors.
- Social workers who need training to maintain their certification are often left on their own to obtain that training.
- Large caseloads hamper the ability of caseworkers to attend training.

**34. The state provides training for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of state licensed or approved facilities that care for children receiving foster care or adoption assistance under Title IV-E that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to foster and adopted children.**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- State has developed a strong training curriculum for foster parents and makes this curriculum available to counties.
- State licensing rules for treatment foster care do mandate training for treatment foster parents, both pre-service and ongoing.
- BMCW and the Adoption Program do have requirements for pre-service training for foster and adoptive parents.
- Group homes and residential care centers do have requirements for training of their staff.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- Neither pre-placement nor ongoing training for foster parents is state-mandated, so training for foster parents in some counties is minimal.
- Child care for foster parents is a barrier to their attending training.
- Only about half of the counties use the training curriculum noted above.



- 35. The state has in place an array of services that assess the strengths and needs of children and families and determine other service needs, address the needs of families in addition to individual children in order to create a safe home environment, enable children to remain safely with their parents when reasonable, and help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency.**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Wisconsin does have some collaboration of services through such programs as Promoting Safe and Stable Families, The Emergency Food Assistance Program, Community Action Agencies, Domestic Violence / Child Protective Services (DV/CPS) collaboration, and the Brighter Futures Initiative.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- State does not have an array of services in place.
- There are gaps in services available to families, such as dental and mental health services, and service needs are not being met on a consistent basis.
- Some stakeholders noted that service gaps may be increasing as budget cuts go into effect.
- Service gaps identified include: dental care providers who accept MA; mental health providers for children who will accept Medical Assistance; treatment and placement resources for children with behavioral problems; prevention and early intervention programs; substance abuse treatment for adults and adolescents (both inpatient and day programs); culturally appropriate services (e.g., bilingual services); post-adoption services; housing options; housing assistance for youth transitioning from out-of-home care to independent living).

- 36. The services in Item 35 are accessible to families and children in all political jurisdictions covered in the state's Children and Family Services Plan (Wisconsin's federally-required five-year child welfare plan).**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

None Specified.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- Stakeholders noted that the state does not provide counties with funding sufficient to pay for basic required child welfare services; counties that have access to local funds can provide the services, but not all counties have local funding available.
- Stakeholders indicated that children and families experienced difficulties accessing some services.
- Stakeholders indicated that many services have waiting lists.
- Other factors identified as being barriers to accessing services include: lack of transportation (in both rural and urban areas); lack of bilingual providers and dependence on translators; immigration status of families (e.g., "mixed" families

with undocumented parents and children who are US citizens); lack of providers who will accept Medical Assistance.

**37. The services in Item 35 can be individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families served by child welfare agencies.**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as a strength overall.
- There is a network of service providers who work in collaboration with local agencies to individualize services to meet children's and families' unique needs.
- The state has established a Brighter Futures Initiative, currently operating in 9 pilot counties.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Stakeholders indicated that there is a lack of culturally appropriate services for Indian children and families.

**38. In implementing the provisions of the CFSP, the state engages in ongoing consultation with tribal representatives, consumers, service providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court, and other public and private child- and family-serving agencies and includes the major concerns of these representatives in the goals and objectives of the CFSP.**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- The state does confer with a limited number of groups representing service providers, tribes, and others.
- There are three Citizen Review Panels currently operating in the state.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- There is a need for a clearly delineated and structured consultation process that allows for tribal and other stakeholders to provide input into goals and objectives of the CFSP.
- Consultation with tribes is often limited to discussions with one staff person at the Great Lakes Intertribal Council and not all of the 11 tribes.
- Consultation often means the opportunity to review a document rather than to be involved in the creation of the document.

**39. DCFS develops, in consultation with these representatives, annual reports of progress and services delivered pursuant to the CFSP.**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as a strength overall.
- DCFS develops annual reports in conjunction with representatives of the Executive Steering Committee.
- The Executive Steering Committee is briefed on a quarterly basis about issues and progress.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Some stakeholders indicated that all 11 tribes should be informed about Title IV-B plans.

**40. The state's services under the CFSP are coordinated with services or benefits of other federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population.**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as a strength overall.
- The state has created initiatives such as the Coordinated Services Team initiative and the managed health care initiative to address the coordination of service issue.
- Many counties have locally-coordinated service plans and teams are effective.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- DCFS could be more fully involved with child support agencies to support the determination of paternity so that fathers and paternal relatives can be more actively involved in child welfare cases.
- Some stakeholders expressed concerns with the lack of communication among agencies to coordinate services and benefits (e.g., TANF funds, tribal notification).
- Confidentiality issues often create barriers to improving coordination.

**41. The state has implemented standards for foster family homes and child care institutions which are reasonably in accord with recommended national standards.**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as a strength overall.
- Counties and private agencies have identified specialized staff to license out-of-home care facilities.
- All foster families must be assessed using a formal, specified process.
- Re-licensure processes involves an updated assessment of caregivers.
- Monitoring of county agencies is conducted to ensure the timeliness of re-licensure activities.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

None Specified.

**42. The standards are applied to all licensed foster family homes or child care institutions receiving Title IV-E or IV-B funds.**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as a strength overall.
- DCFS has issued an annotated version of the foster home licensing rule to provide guidance to licensing agencies when granting an exception is appropriate.
- Only DCFS grants exceptions resulting in a uniform application of the licensing standards.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Stakeholders indicated that occasionally a child may be placed in an unlicensed relative home before a criminal background check has been conducted.

**43. The state complies with federal requirements for criminal background clearances as related to licensing foster care and adoptive placements and has in place a case planning process that includes provisions for addressing the safety of foster care and adoptive placements for children.**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as a strength overall.
- The state has a very specific and stringent law that identifies certain offenses that will restrict a person from receiving a child welfare license.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Some stakeholders noted that background checks were not routinely conducted on relative caregivers.

**44. The state has in place a process for ensuring the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the state for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed.**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

- Rated as a strength overall.
- The state's special needs adoption program has taken a lead role in working to ensure that recruitment strategies are developed to recruit a diverse pool of adoptive families.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Stakeholders noted a need for more African-American, Hmong, and Native American foster homes.

**45. The state has in place a process for the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children.**

*Strengths and Accomplishments*

None Specified.

*Key Performance Issues/Concerns*

- Rated as needing improvement overall.
- The WI County Human Services Association is developing an inter-county agreement that addresses jurisdiction and case transfer issues.

## D. Progress in Child Welfare

The challenges raised in the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) are not new to Wisconsin. Responding to them will be a continuation of our ongoing work to revise and improve policy, practice, and quality assurance efforts in child welfare. Much important work has already begun in a number of Wisconsin counties to improve child welfare outcomes.

The following list highlights progress made by the three counties that were the subject of the CFSR (Milwaukee, Kenosha, and Outagamie) as well as statewide by the Division of Children and Family Service, in consultation with counties and tribes.

### Protecting Child Safety

- DCFS is developing an administrative rule (Ch. HFS 43, Adm. Code) that deals with both *appeals of substantiation decisions* and *assuring that child protective services receive appropriate training*. This is to further protect the legal and constitutional rights of children and families, and to ensure staff receives proper training to work with children and families on issues of abuse and neglect.
- DCFS recently implemented the *CPS Ongoing Service Standards and Practice Guidelines* to provide consistent direction to staff that serve children and families following child abuse investigations and assessments. The Division is preparing to develop the second phase of those standards relating to the safety of children in out-of-home care.
- DCFS recently issued guidance to agencies for developing and implementing *memoranda of understanding (MOU) between child protective services and law enforcement agencies*. Law enforcement must refer all reports of alleged child abuse or neglect to CPS agencies and CPS agencies must refer all cases of sexual abuse to law enforcement. In many cases, more effective work can be done jointly by these two agencies that provide unique but complimentary functions. By April 2004, Outagamie County will have completed an MOU with all law enforcement agencies within the county to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the collaborating agencies and allow for conflict resolution if problems should arise.
- Over the past several years, DCFS has increased the level of cooperation between and collaboration of child protective services and *domestic violence* service providers. We are working on a curriculum for both programs that more clearly describes the interconnectedness of child abuse and neglect and domestic violence and helps programs better recognize the problems in the families we serve.
- The CPS staff of Outagamie County Human Services completed a *memorandum of understanding* with Harbor House, a *community-based domestic violence service provider*. This MOU is a model for the state. Joint trainings have been held, liaisons have been appointed, and all CPS staff and supervisors in Outagamie County are required to attend the trainings sponsored by the New Partnership relating to Domestic Violence and Child Welfare.

- As part of the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (BMCW) Court Improvement Plan, a ***coordinated service*** approach was implemented. All parties involved in the court action set a date after the temporary physical custody hearing for the team to meet and implement services to control for the safety of the children and determine a visitation plan.
- Kenosha County operates a Coordinated Response Team (CORE). This ***multidisciplinary staffing approach*** deals with cases where there is an allegation of child maltreatment. Any number of community stakeholders (e.g., school personnel, therapists, DV advocates, law enforcement, DCFS personnel, DAs office, GALs) can schedule a CORE staffing. During these staffings, safety issues are identified and plans are developed to assure safety and address other issues in the family.

### **Permanence for Children**

- DCFS is developing an administrative rule (Ch. HFS 44, Adm. Code) ***on reasonable efforts and permanency planning*** for county agencies, the courts, the adoption program, foster parents, and others on preventing the removal of children from their homes. The rule will also describe conditions for safe, stable, and permanent living arrangements for children who have been removed from their homes.
- In 2001, Kenosha County developed an ***Intensive Aftercare Reunification Project*** designed to increase efforts to achieve timely reunification between children and their caregivers. These cases are staffed with a Transition Team, with representatives from the County DCFS, DA's office, private providers, two consulting psychologists and a psychiatrist. Reunification Caseworkers work closely with the families to identify remaining obstacles to children's return home.
- In 2000, the DCFS Adoption Program implemented ***Standards for Adoption***. These standards set timelines for permanence and quality standards for the program. In addition, the Adoption Program has worked with staff from counties, private agencies, and the Bureau of Programs and Policies to develop a ***Permanency Consultation Timeline*** that highlights key decision points and required legal findings, and identifies the responsible person at each point in the case process.
- The DCFS Adoption Program continues to find ***permanence for a record number of children*** each year. In 2003, there were 1150 finalized special needs adoptions in Wisconsin. Over the past five years, there has been a steady increase in the number of finalized special needs adoptions: 654 in 1999; 719 in 2000; 730 in 2001; and 1044 in 2002.
- Division staff have been meeting for over a year with representatives of the ***Indian Child Welfare agencies*** operated by each of Wisconsin's 11 tribes. There are philosophical and cultural issues associated with the concept of permanence that vary among tribes. It is critical that procedures for protecting and providing

for permanence for Indian children and assuring the rights of tribes to raise their children are safeguarded through 161 Agreements and other policies that are uniform across the state.

- Outagamie County staff and supervisors were trained in the importance of ***locating non-custodial parents and relatives*** when making placement decisions.
- As part of the BMCW Court Improvement Plan, ***parental or sibling visitation***, when appropriate, is set up within 5 days after a child's out-of-home care placement.

### **Well-Being of Children and Families**

- DCFS is in the initial stages of developing policies, procedures, and practices that will result in a more coordinated approach to ***multidisciplinary reviews of child fatalities***.
- DCFS is committed to assisting the Wisconsin County Human Services Association (WCHSA) in developing a uniform agreement among counties on the ***inter-agency transfer of child protective service cases*** from one county to another to assure that children and families do not fall "between the cracks" when the responsibility for the provision of services changes from one agency to another. Outagamie County has developed policy that specifically outlines needed information, including documentation of threats to child safety, and a safety plan, when applicable, for courtesy supervision cases. This policy is an important addendum to the existing agreement.
- The BMCW provides ***placement packets*** for all children who are entering out-of-home care. This packet contains medical, school, placement history, and family information about the child and a temporary medical card and is given to the placement provider. This information is updated throughout the child's time in placement.
- Outagamie County has implemented an ***Independent Living Program*** to ensure that children "aging out of the system" are aware of and connected with needed services.
- Kenosha County operates the ***Families First*** wraparound project. Families First is designed to provide families of children who experience severe emotional disturbances with needed support services to prevent out-of-home placements and improve educational opportunities. The project is committed to the belief that the best way to care for families in need is to draw from their strengths and incorporate those strengths into an effective, measurable individualized case plan.

### **Systemic Issues**

- Over the last several years, DCFS has designed and implemented Wisconsin's ***statewide, automated child welfare information system*** (WiSACWIS). This system, which is scheduled to be operational in all counties in June of 2004, is designed to guide practice, notify caseworkers and supervisors of impending plan reviews and court hearings, and provide assistance in the day-to-day management

of their cases. Outagamie County has begun implementing WiSACWIS, and its staff have been trained in use of the system and in the Wisconsin Model.

- The BMCW has a dedicated staff of program evaluation managers (PEMs). Their role is to *monitor the quality of the work of BMCW* and vendor partner staff through management reports, semi-annual reviews, and annual comprehensive reviews. They meet regularly with agencies to support progress in achieving outcomes in safety, permanence, and well-being.
- Counties have historically, with technical assistance and ongoing consultation from the Division, been responsible for developing their own practices related to conducting child protective services investigations, developing safety plans, and providing treatment for children who have been abused or neglected. As part of the child welfare case management system, DCFS and counties created the **Wisconsin Model** for serving children and families. This effort created a more uniform, statewide practice model that better assures that the needs of children and families are identified and met.
- Outagamie County will assure that all Child Protection staff complete the **core competency training** by December 2004. This training is provided by the NEW Training Partnership.
- **Child Advocacy Centers** (CAC) are expanding. Two years ago, one opened in Kenosha. The CAC provides both medical exams and forensic interviews when there has been an allegation of child maltreatment. This has enhanced the community's efforts in the identification and prosecution of child abuse and neglect. Outagamie County is establishing a **Child Advocacy Center** with Children's Hospital of Wisconsin. Protocols for medical, mental health, and substance abuse assessments are in the final draft. The Child Advocacy Center will begin examining/assessing children by June 2004. BMCW, in collaboration with the Milwaukee County Child Abuse Review Team (CART) and the Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, established a **Child Advocacy Center** in 2003. Protocols for forensic interviewing are used to coordinate child abuse and neglect investigation.

## **E. Next Steps: Wisconsin's Process Towards Its Program Enhancement Plan**

### *Development of the Program Enhancement Plan (PEP)*

As noted earlier, the Program Enhancement Plan is based on the federal compliance document required in response to the State's performance on the CFSR. For each area not in conformance, the State needs to develop goals, strategies for achieving these goals, and benchmarks of success.

In September 2003, DCFS established a Program Enhancement Plan (PEP) Core Team to produce a specific plan to respond to the issues raised in the review. The PEP Core Team is comprised of representatives of the Department, County Departments of Human Services and Social Services, tribes, the courts, Child Welfare Training Partnerships, the



University of Wisconsin System, and other interested stakeholders. [See Attachment 1 for a complete listing of Team members and their affiliations.] The Core Team met frequently since August of 2003 to identify problems in child welfare and to discuss their underlying causes.

Seven separate subcommittees were formed to develop strategies in each of the areas of quality assurance, training, case review, foster care recruitment and retention, services for children and families, communication strategies, and information system capacity. Among the PEP Core Team and the five subcommittees, child welfare experts from across Wisconsin generated nearly 250 recommendations for consideration in Wisconsin's PEP. The Core Team will continue to meet together and with stakeholders across the state until the PEP strategies are chosen, submitted, and approved to the federal Administration on Children and Families.

DHFS staff have been meeting with staff of Indian Child Welfare Agencies over the past year to identify tribal concerns related to child welfare in Wisconsin. This effort resulted in the identification of seven overall areas of concern. In addition, DCFS and county representatives held several meetings with Indian tribal child welfare staff and integrated their concerns into the overall planning effort.

The involvement of county and tribal child welfare agencies will be central to the process of implementing the goals and strategies in the PEP. DCFS will report progress quarterly to the federal government. At the end of the two-year PEP period, Wisconsin will undergo a second federal review to determine the degree of progress we have made in the targeted areas.

#### *Wisconsin's Five-Year Child and Family Services Plan*

Related to its Program Enhancement Plan, Wisconsin is also in the process of developing our five-year Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) for the federal government. The five-year plan will reflect longer-term strategies for improving child welfare outcomes and programs in our state. We will provide the federal government with annual updates to the plan over the five-year period and will amend the plan as necessary to accomplish the goals we have established.

These are challenging times, but Wisconsin's commitment to improving child welfare is shared by county, state, tribal, and private agency child welfare professionals at all levels. We are committed to supporting increased capacity for local CPS agencies and workers to implement best practices; to better help families care for their own children by offering services in family-friendly ways; to act more quickly to place children in high quality foster and adoptive homes when appropriate; and to set priorities and focus resources accordingly. Together, we will shape a child welfare system that effectively and efficiently assures safety and permanence for children.

Finally, as Wisconsin uses the PEP as an opportunity to strengthen interventions when children are abused, the state will give priority to our prevention strategies, to reduce the factors that place children at risk of abuse and neglect.

## Attachment A

### PEP Core Committee Members

#### **Rachelle Alioto**

Reggie Bicha  
Sally Biddick  
Mike Bloedorn  
Jennifer Borup

John Chrest  
Pat Cork  
Rosemary Davis

Joan Delabreau  
Charity Eleson  
Colleen Ellingson  
John Grace

Harry Hobbs  
Gerald Huber  
Bill Hunter  
John Jansen

Michelle Jensen Goodwin  
Fred Johnson

Richard Kammerud  
Charmian Klyve  
Bob Lee  
Don Maurer

Jim Moeser  
Ami Orlin  
Stephanie Reilly  
Denise Revels Robinson  
Ron Rogers  
Lu Rowley

Sue Saeger  
Kristen Shook Slack  
Diane Waller

#### **Director of Training**

Director  
CPS Program Manager  
Director  
Director

Director  
Area Administrator  
Deputy Director

Chairwoman  
Director  
Executive Director  
Executive Director

Assistant Area Administrator  
Director  
CPS Program Manager  
Director

Project Director  
Supervisor

Director  
Director  
CPS Program Manager  
CPS Program Manager

Administrator  
CPS Program Manager  
Interim Director  
Director  
Lead Social Work Supervisor  
Director

Director  
Assistant Professor  
Director

#### **Milwaukee Training Partnership**

Pierce County Human Services Dept.  
Rock County Human Services Dept.  
Washington County Social Services  
Western Wisconsin Training  
Partnership

Wood County Social Services  
DHFS/Office of Strategic Finance  
Outagamie County Health & Human  
Services

Menominee Indian Tribe of WI  
WI Council on Children and Families  
Adoption Resources of Wisconsin  
WI Assoc. of Family & Children's  
Agencies

DHFS/Office of Strategic Finance  
La Crosse Co. Human Services  
Brown Co. Human Services  
Kenosha Co. Child and Family  
Services Division

Director of State Courts Office  
St. Croix County Health & Human  
Services

Polk County Human Services  
Rock County Human Services  
Dane County Human Services  
Waukesha County Health & Human  
Services

Division of Juvenile Corrections  
Dane County Human Services  
NEW Partnership – UW Green Bay  
Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare  
Kenosha County Human Services  
Waushara Co. Dept. of Social  
Services

Southern CW Training Partnership  
UW School of Social Work  
DHFS/Office of Strategic Finance

DCFS Staff on the Core Committee included: Kitty Kocol, Mark Campbell, John Tuohy, Bill Fiss, Dave Hergert, Cris Ros-Dukler, Connie Klick, Mark Mitchell, Dale Langer, Jill Chase, Mary Dibble, Amy Smith, Paula Brown, S. Kate Johnson, Sharon Lewandowski, Tammara LeMay, Michelle Rawlings, and Barb Berlin

PEP Systemic Factor Subcommittee Members

*Information System Capacity (WISACWIS System and use of data)*

John Tuohy	Beth Wydeven
Michelle Rawlings	Dan Wendt
Bill Fiss	Harry Hobbs
Amy Johnson	

*Quality Assurance (State program standards and quality assurance activities)*

Pat Cooper	Barb Berlin
Mark Campbell	Paula Brown
Kitty Kocol	Judy Herman
Pat Cork	John Tuohy

*Communication Strategies (Sharing information and involving stakeholders)*

Kitty Kocol	Diane Waller
Kenneth Munson	Jim Malone
Denise Revels Robinson	Mark Campbell

*Case Review System (Written Case plans and regular permanency hearings.)*

Michelle Jensen Goodwin	Mark Butterfield
Mark Mitchell	Theresa Bacchi
Therese Durkin	Sally Biddick
Todd Campbell	Ellen Cheney
Therese Durkin	Sheila Corbin
Pamela Eitland	Kris Goodwill
Rhonda Tousey	Laura Kuehn
Connie Klick	Fred Johnson
Mary Jo Keating	Julie Jensen
Bill Fiss	Honorable Christopher Foley
Kate Johnson	Marianne Genter
Honorable John Murphy	Jodi Timmerman

*Service Array (Needs assessment and services to families and children.)*

Connie Klick	Rhonda Tousey
Dan Naylor	Amy Smith
Ron Rogers	Julie Allison
Mary Dibble	Sandy Hoefert
Chatellah Brown	Carol Wright
Dan Naylor	Mark Mitchell
Sharon Lewandowski	Sue Sleezer

*Staff and Provider Training (Training for local agency staff)*

Amy Smith	Reggie Bicha
Chris Sieck	Bob Goetter
Stephanie Reilly	John Touhy
Mike Bloedorn	Rachelle Alioto
Don Gjestfeld	Jennifer Borup

*Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention (Standards for licensing, criminal background checks, recruitment and foster and adoptive parent training)*

Kate Johnson	Eliane Reis
Dale Langer	Erin Brophy
Sally Hanko-Dees	Renee Sutkay
Cathy Swessel	Kristin Lampke
Colleen Ellingson	Amy Orlin
Jill Chase	Nan Upright-Sexton
Tammara Lemay	Deena Williams
Patty Hammes	